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The USSR and China

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THE USSR AND CHINA

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the general course of Sino-Soviet relations over the next three years.

CONCLUSIONS

A. Sino-Soviet relations, which have been tense and hostile for many years, have deteriorated even further since the armed clashes on the Ussuri River last March. There is little or no prospect for improvement in the relationship, and partly for this reason, no likelihood that the fragments of the world Communist movement will be pieced together.

B. For the first time, it is reasonable to ask whether a major Sino-Soviet war could break out in the near future. The potential for such a war clearly exists. Moreover, the Soviets have reasons, chiefly the emerging Chinese nuclear threat to the USSR, to argue that the most propitious time for an attack is soon, rather than several years hence. At the same time, the attendant military and political uncertainties must also weigh heavily upon the collective leadership in Moscow.

C. We do not look for a deliberate Chinese attack on the USSR. Nor do we believe the Soviets would wish to become involved in a prolonged, large-scale conflict. While we cannot say it is likely, we see some chance that Moscow might think it could launch a strike against China's nuclear and missile facilities without getting involved in such a conflict. In any case, a climate of high tension, marked by periodic clashes along the border, is likely to obtain. The scale of fighting may occasionally be greater than heretofore, and might even involve punitive cross-border raids by the Soviets. Under such circumstances, escalation is an ever present possibility.

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D. In the light of the dispute, each side appears to be reassessing its foreign policy. The Soviets seem intent on attracting new allies, or at least benevolent neutrals, in order to "contain" the Chinese. To that end Moscow has signified some desire to improve the atmosphere of its relations with the West. The Chinese, who now appear to regard the USSR as their most immediate enemy, will face stiff competition from the Soviets in attempting to expand their influence in Asia.

DISCUSSION

I. POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. The causes of the Sino-Soviet dispute are complex and, by now, intertangled. Some reflect primarily the clash of important national interests, compounded by historical and racial enmities, and the distrust of one great power for a neighboring power. These conflicting interests include, for example, the USSR's refusal in the late 1950's to satisfy China's demands for the wherewithal to achieve a nuclear weapons capability, diverging foreign policies and international priorities, Chinese dissatisfaction with the terms of Soviet economic aid and Soviet economic sanctions, Sino-Russian competition for influence elsewhere in East and South Asia, China's claims to Far Eastern and Central Asian territory ceded to Russia during the 19th century.[1] To some extent these issues would have arisen to complicate relations between Russians and Chinese almost regardless of the political systems in Moscow and Peking.

2. Ideology has also contributed to the development of the dispute. From its early stages, Peking has challenged the USSR's ideological supremacy and infallibility. Mao has rejected the Soviet model for internal socialist development; has also has rejected Soviet strategies for encouraging the spread of Communism, and he has asserted that his own doctrines must be treated with the same respect as those of Lenin. A struggle for leadership of the world's Communist Parties continues, waged in great part with ideological arguments. These ideological arguments have compounded economic and political rivalries. The ideological perspective limits the ability of the two sides to compromise their own quarrels, to agree to disagree. Misconceptions of each other's motives and behavior tend to become encapsulated in doctrinal formulae, and are thereby made rigid.

3. Personalities have played some role in the quarrel. Khrushchev and Mao found each other particularly antipathetic. After the fall of Khrushchev, probes by both governments during visits by Chou En-lai to Moscow and Kosygin to Peking in the winter of 1964-1965 convinced both sides that their differences were beyond compromise. The Chinese interpreted Khrushchev's removal as a vindication of their own ideological positions, while the new Soviet leadership would not go beyond certain limits in modifying the basic course set by Khrushchev.

[1] See Annex.

And while the Soviets now publicly express their hope that Mao's passing might lead to a less anti-Soviet policy in Peking, their private statements as well as their acts indicate that they expect the Chinese problem to be with them for the foreseeable future.

4. By mid-1965 the Chinese resumed their public attacks on Moscow and the new Soviet leaders moved toward a policy that might be described as the "containment" of China. This policy has several aspects: ideological isolation of China within the world Communist movement, political isolation of China by strengthening Soviet ties with Asian countries, economic isolation by drastically reducing Sino-Soviet trade, propaganda designed to warn the Soviet people and their allies of the perils of Maoism, and an impressive increase in Soviet military strength at key points along the Chinese frontier. The Chinese have tried to counter these moves by seeking support of other Communist states and Parties, by trying to establish pro-Chinese factions within Communist Parties, and by propaganda even more virulent than that of the Soviets.

5. In launching the Cultural Revolution, one of Mao's aims was to rid the Chinese Communist leadership of elements inclined towards revisionist policies attributed to Moscow. The Cultural Revolution movement was accompanied by an upsurge of anti-Soviet propaganda and maltreatment of Soviet personnel by the Chinese "masses." Judging from official Soviet propaganda, the Cultural Revolution convinced the Kremlin that the Chinese had virtually abandoned Marxism-Leninism, had eliminated moderate cadres, and had created a personal Maoist dictatorship intent on increasing its military strength. The fact that China was beginning to achieve a nuclear capability added to Moscow's fears. Thus the "containment" measures begun in 1965 were continued and even intensified.

6. From 1965 to 1969, Sino-Soviet state and economic relations declined steadily. Each country recalled its ambassador in 1966, and during the following year each unilaterally cancelled several minor agreements. Cultural contacts, ostensibly regulated by annual protocols, are in limbo. The February 1950 Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance is technically valid until 1980, but Peking has indicated that it does not count on or necessarily want Soviet military assistance, and the Soviets have implied that they would not feel bound to provide it. In the economic sphere, the total annual trade between the two countries, which reached a peak of over $2 billion in 1959, sank to less than $100 million in 1968.

7. As relations deteriorated, propaganda attacks increased. In February 1967, for example, when the Soviet embassy in Peking was under siege, the Sino-Soviet conflict accounted for about 25 percent of all Soviet propaganda, foreign and domestic, and about 50 percent of all Chinese propaganda. The Chinese were equally busy attacking the Soviets during November 1967, the 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Nearly as voluble was their denunciation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Soviet use of force against a neighboring Socialist state was clearly disturbing to Peking. The Chinese chose this moment to protest publicly against Soviet intrusions into Chinese airspace, and

to renew charges that the Soviets were building up troops along the border and in Mongolia.

8. With the Ussuri River episodes of March 1969, the already tense and hostile relationship between the two countries entered a critical phase. The dozen or so known border clashes have involved uniformed forces as well as civilians, and appear to have produced several hundred fatalities. During March, the levels of propaganda rose to unprecedented heights—to 30 percent of all broadcasts for the Soviets and about 75 percent for the Chinese—and the tone became notably harsher. Both sides began stressing highly emotional themes—heroic deaths, funerals, patriotic letters stained with blood, and the like. Since March, the level of propaganda has fluctuated at generally lower levels, but ominous new themes have appeared. Soviet commentators, who formerly sought to convey a Soviet attitude of calm and restraint in dealing with Red Guard extremism, now stress that Maoism, "a criminal racist theory," represents a "chauvinistic intoxication" that has "reached a point of being a military threat" to the Soviet Union. In his June speech to the International Communist Conference, Brezhnev denounced the Chinese Communists at great length and alleged that Peking was preparing for nuclear war against the USSR. And although playing upon xenophobia and the threat of "foreign devils" is not a new tactic for Peking, the current campaign in China, emphasizing that the Chinese must not show "the slightest timidity before a wild beast," seems to be more extreme than in the past. Lin Piao has warned that China may have to cope with "a big war . . . at an early date—a conventional war . . . or a nuclear war."

9. Both Peking and Moscow have publicly expressed a readiness to negotiate their border disputes. Nevertheless, each side has adopted rigid positions and has made deliberately annoying statements. The Chinese deny they intend to claim thousands of square miles of present Soviet territory, but they insist that Moscow acknowledge that the treaties whereby Russian tsars gained title to those lands are "unequal." The Soviet side has shown inflexibility by claiming that an uninhabited and frequently flooded island in the Ussuri River is "age-old Russian soil," and it has suggested provocatively that Manchuria and Sinkiang are not historically part of China. The talks on navigation and border rivers which resumed in Khabarovsk in mid-June have yielded some results in the form of an agreement on navigation regulations for 1969; but no date has been set for broader talks on territorial matters, and the outlook for such talks is poor.

10. These developments outlined pose the larger question of how far the foreign policy of each regime will be affected by the continuing deterioration of the relationship. The Ninth CCP Congress did not formally demote Washington from its position as enemy number one, but the choicest vitriol was reserved for the Soviets. Chinese overtures this year to "ultrarevisionist" Yugoslavia suggest that Peking has become more flexible in pursuing a basically anti-Soviet foreign policy. There is good reason to believe that the Soviet leaders now see China as their most pressing international problem, and are beginning to tailor their policies on other issues accordingly. Brezhnev's suggestion for

an Asian collective security system, and Foreign Minister Gromyko's address to the USSR Supreme Soviet in July, in which a moderate tone toward the West was juxtaposed with harsh words for the Chinese, both suggest that Moscow is seeking allies, or at least benevolent neutrals, against China.

II. THE MILITARY DIMENSION

11. Until late 1965, Soviet theater forces near the Chinese border were very thin, though some steps were taken to improve their capability to handle border skirmishes. The Chinese also saw to their own border security requirements during the pre-1965 period. However, a persistent and impressive Soviet military buildup began in late 1965. At that time there were many possible reasons for the buildup: the Chinese challenge to Soviet hegemony, China's successful nuclear tests, and China's growing role in Asia. At any rate, it appears that the present Soviet force structure in the East reflects decisions taken in 1965, although Moscow may recently have raised its original military force goals.

12. As of June 1969, the Soviets had some 30 ground force divisions along the Sino-Soviet border and in Mongolia, double the figure of late 1965. About half the divisions were at combat strength, and others were gradually being raised to that status. These divisions were backed up by an unusually large complement of conventional artillery and of tactical surface-to-surface missiles. The increase in Soviet tactical air strength has kept pace with the ground force increase.

13. There has been no corresponding buildup on the Chinese side. The Chinese have only about nine ground force divisions in the border areas of Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, and the Heilungkiang-Kirin regions of Manchuria. And although the Chinese have more than 50 divisions behind them in the Shenyang-Peking-Lanchou Military Regions, these are no match for Soviet divisions in firepower and mobility.

14. The disparity between the Soviets and Chinese in other types of forces is even more pronounced. Chinese air defenses have been improved in recent years, but remain thin, whereas Soviet air defenses are heavy and have been strengthened since 1965. The Soviets have continually maintained about 225 medium and heavy bombers in the area, and could quickly add to this force from other parts of the USSR; the Chinese medium bomber force of a dozen or so is largely obsolete. There are a considerable number of strategic missiles in Soviet Central Asia and the Far East which could be targeted against China. Finally, the Soviet Pacific Fleet is more than a match for the entire Chinese Navy.

15. In a military confrontation, the factor of space affects each country, though in different ways. The great length of the border makes linear defense along its whole extent virtually impossible. The USSR's vital Transsiberian Railroad runs close to the Manchurian border; thus defense in depth is not feasible for the Soviets in that sector. Hence, Soviet strategy requires a concentration of theater forces for rapid attack or counter-attack along traditional invasion routes into China. What we know of Soviet troop dispositions seems to bear out this analysis. In contrast, the Chinese military planner might feel that he could yield

part of Sinkiang and northern Manchuria to an attacking force. Not only does such a strategy accord with Mao's concepts of "protracted warfare," but the alternative—positioning large Chinese theater forces in those salients prior to hostilities—would offer Soviet commanders the opportunity to encircle and trap these units.

16. The Soviets also face problems of time. Ideally, a war with China should achieve its aims quickly, to avoid the dangers of protracted conventional warfare against the inexhaustible reservoir of Chinese manpower. The Soviets could simplify this military problem by using nuclear weapons, but this would enormously complicate their political problems. Moreover, from a Soviet planner's standpoint, a conflict with the Chinese, if it is to occur at all, should be initiated fairly soon, before the Chinese deploy an MRBM force.

III. PROSPECTS

17. It is almost certain that there will be no significant easing of tensions during the next two or three years. Conflicting national interests, competition for leadership of the Communist movement, and genuine fear of each other's intentions will prevent a rapprochement. Even the border problems are not likely to be resolved. While both sides may be willing to reach some temporary accommodation, neither is likely to compromise any fundamental positions.

18. The propaganda line in both the USSR and in China is very sharp. Each country now considers the other its most immediate enemy; each country accuses the other of plotting with the imperialists to encircle and destroy it. In this kind of atmosphere any act by the other side is viewed with suspicion; any military preparations appear menacing. For the first time, it is reasonable to ask whether a Sino-Soviet war could break out during the next two or three years.

19. The fact that such a question can be seriously posed is a measure of the gravity of the Sino-Soviet conflict. The potential for a war exists; to the Soviets, at least, early military action might seem to have many advantages. But a decision to attack is a political act and we have no firm evidence about the intentions of Chinese and Soviet leaders.

20. We believe that an unprovoked, major attack by China into Soviet territory is highly unlikely. This judgment is based primarily on the fact of China's disadvantage in military power, and its basic unpreparedness for large-scale war beyond its northern borders. Moreover, since the Korean War, China has avoided major military confrontation with the two great powers. It is also hard to see what advantages China could gain from an attack. Propaganda about the Soviet threat may of course be designed to foster the national unity required to rebuild the power structure shattered by the Cultural Revolution, but an actual war could imperil any gains achieved. At present the Chinese probably have two objectives: to deter a Soviet attack which they believe has grown more likely with the Soviet military buildup, and to promote national preparedness to meet the threat. Peking apparently has chosen to signal its determination by a strategy of small-scale confrontations in border areas where the Chinese legal claim is good.

21. By contrast, we see reasons why the Soviets might now, or in the near future, consider major offensive actions against the Chinese. Soviet planners, looking beyond minor border clashes, must feel that the real danger is yet to come. During the tenure of Mao, or that of his immediate successor, the Chinese will probably deploy a nuclear missile force, and a more substantial medium bomber force than they now possess. The Soviet leaders might feel that even a small number of Chinese missiles would alter the strategic situation, and that as the force grew, the Chinese would be under fewer inhibitions in using their ground forces. The Soviets might hope to prevent this development by using their air superiority to knock out Chinese nuclear and missile installations, while blocking Chinese retaliatory attacks on the ground with their own theater forces. The optimum period for exercising this option is beginning to slip away.

22. The Soviet leaders might see other important benefits in military action. A major defeat of Chinese forces would demonstrate the might of the Soviet armed forces throughout the world, and help the prestige of the Soviet leadership at home. The Soviets might even hope for the downfall of the Mao-Lin regime, or if it survived, the detachment of Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, and Manchuria from China. They might thus be able to establish a buffer zone like that in Eastern Europe. In fact, protection of national minorities in the Sinkiang and Inner Mongolian regions against Chinese oppression might be the excuse for opening a war.

23. A body of recent evidence concerning Soviet military activity suggests that Moscow may be preparing to take action against China in the near future. Lately, there has been unusual military activity on the Soviet side of the Chinese border, including an unusually large exercise in which China was apparently the simulated enemy. Some air units were temporarily deployed from parts of the Western USSR normally considered the base for reinforcement against NATO. Also, the Transsiberian Railroad has been carrying a volume of military traffic apparently large enough to interfere with normal civilian traffic. This military activity seems disproportionate to any visible Chinese offensive threat. Meanwhile the Chinese, whose military force deployment had remained virtually static during the earlier Soviet buildup, have recently made minor adjustments in their air defenses which suggest that they may be taking a more serious view of the situation.

24. There are also political indicators that suggest that the Soviets may be preparing for a showdown with China. The Kremlin is clearly trying to ease friction with the West; one purpose is almost certainly to expand its freedom of action in the East. Soviet propaganda repeats the themes that Mao is a "warlord," a "chauvinist," a "militarist," that he thinks that war is the only solution to his problems, that like all warmongers, he falsely accuses the Kremlin of planning an attack on him in order to excuse his own evil plans. Finally, recent articles and broadcasts deplore the oppression of Uigurs, Kazakhs, and Mongolians in China, and suggest that rebellion by these peoples would be justified.

25. On the other hand, the Soviets must recognize the formidable risks of military action. From a military point of view, this rests mainly on the uncertainty

of the outcome. Even if the Soviet leaders believe that a conventional air strike would knock out Chinese nuclear and missile installations, they must surely realize that they would be starting a process which they could not be sure of controlling, and whose course would be determined as much by the Chinese as by themselves. They must also ask themselves whether, later if not sooner, it might be necessary to use nuclear weapons against Chinese troops or installations, with all the political costs of such a course, and whether the Chinese, though at a great disadvantage in modern weaponry, might still manage to deliver nuclear weapons on Vladivostok or Khabarovsk.

28. Even if the Soviets succeeded completely in destroying Chinese nuclear and missile capabilities, and were, in addition, able to establish viable buffer states on the frontier, the rest of China would remain unconquered. The Soviets have no assurance that the Mao-Lin regime would fall, or that, in any case, the Chinese would stop fighting. Regardless of the type of regime in unoccupied China, it would be even more bitterly hostile to the USSR than it is at present, and it would be even more determined to gain a nuclear capability.

27. Moreover certain political factors militate against a Soviet attack on China. The nature of collective leadership is such that the men in the Kremlin might find it easier to continue a policy of improving military and political defenses against the Chinese heresy than to reach a decision to attack. A Soviet-initiated war would certainly complicate Moscow's relations with Hanoi and might seriously reduce Russian influence there. Both Communist and non-Communist states in Europe might take advantage of Soviet involvement in Asia, particularly if the war were protracted. A war would make reconciliation with China impossible for many years, and it is by no means certain that the Soviets have given up all hope of some improvement in their relations with China after the period of Mao and Lin. Brezhnev's article in the August issue of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* reaffirmed Soviet friendship for the Chinese people and suggested that he expected a long period of tension rather than an early outbreak of hostilities. The same note has been struck in other recent statements.

28. As above noted, we do not look for a deliberate Chinese attack on the USSR. We also believe that Moscow will seek to avoid becoming engaged in a prolonged and full-scale war with China. But the Soviets have set in motion an extensive series of measures—military, political, diplomatic—to ready themselves for continuing or increasing levels of hostility. Their preparations have already reached a stage which would permit them a variety of military options. Of these, the Soviets might find the most attractive to be a conventional air strike designed to destroy China's missile and nuclear installations. The Soviets might calculate that they could accomplish this objective without getting involved in a prolonged and full-scale war. We cannot say that they are likely to reach this conclusion but we believe there is at least some chance they would.

29. In any case, it is clear that tension between the two countries has become acute. At the very least, polemics will remain strident, and the dispute in its present form will probably intensify and grow. Barring a change in Chinese

policy, armed clashes will occur periodically. The scale of fighting may occasionally be greater than heretofore, and might even involve punitive cross-border raids by Soviet ground and tactical air forces. Under such circumstances, escalation of the conflict will be a continuing possibility.

IV. IMPACT OF THE DISPUTE ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD*

A. Policies Toward South and East Asia

30. In those South and East Asian nations which view China as a potential security threat, Moscow appears hopeful of gaining politically from its quarrel with the Chinese. We see the recent Soviet suggestions concerning "a system of collective security in Asia" as an effort to capitalize on an anticipated reduction in the Western presence and, at the same time, to prevent any significant Chinese gains in its wake. In trying to contain the Chinese, the Soviets can play upon Asian fear of China and Asian resentment of Chinese support of local subversive elements. These themes will be particularly persuasive in such mainland states as India, Burma, and Thailand. The Soviets may also try to exploit widespread local animosity toward the large ethnic Chinese minorities in Malaysia and Indonesia.

31. The continuation of the Sino-Soviet dispute—coupled with the Soviet effort to project its influence into South and East Asia—will work to limit Chinese options. Peking has clearly believed that the prolonged struggle in Vietnam would lead ultimately to a substantial weakening of US power and influence in East Asia. The Chinese have foreseen opportunities in the post-Vietnam period for expansion of their own influence, particularly in such nearby states as Burma and Thailand; they may also have hoped for a far more influential role in Hanoi and, by extension, in Laos and Cambodia, once Soviet war materiel was no longer necessary to the North Vietnamese. But with large Soviet forces poised on a tense border, Peking will almost certainly find it more difficult to intimidate its southern neighbors by flexing its military muscles or rattling its nuclear weapons. The Chinese will face intensified Soviet competition in dealing with established Asian governments and in organizing leftist groups.

32. The continuing Sino-Soviet conflict will be reflected in an important way in relations with Japan. The Soviets see Japan as the emerging power center in Asia, with a serious military potential as well as an ability to provide the Chinese, via trade and aid, with the sinews of a modern industrial state. Moscow wants to forestall both developments, but its leverage in Tokyo is not very great. It can get some small advantage from Japanese hopes for the eventual return of Habomai and Shikotan and can exploit Japanese interest in investment opportunities in Siberian resources. Moscow has some influence in Japan's main opposition party, the Socialists, and even among the independent-minded Japanese Communists, though Peking also possesses allies among the leftist opposition.

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*This discussion is predicated on the assumption that the dispute between the USSR and China remains at about its present level, i.e., short of major war.

33. The major Chinese assets in this contest for influence in Tokyo are the common cultural traditions and the longstanding Japanese distrust of Russia. In addition, Japan probably views Chinese markets as more profitable over the longer term than costly and risky joint enterprises with the Soviets in Siberia. (In any case, the Japanese are in a position to bargain for and secure both.) Japan obviously relishes its current bargaining position among the powers—the US, as well as China and the USSR—and would almost certainly not want to antagonize any of them in order to gain some transitory advantage with the USSR or China.

8. The US and the West

34. Elsewhere, the Soviets have taken the position that, because of the China problem, the USSR should generally seek to avoid provoking unnecessary difficulties—e.g., over Berlin—with the US in particular and the West in general. Since one of their greatest fears is that the US or the Federal Republic of Germany might be willing to put pressure on the USSR in collusion with China, they will try to preserve an atmosphere of detente, and to be accommodating on minor issues. Problems with China may have encouraged the Soviets to look upon arms control measures with growing interest, seeing in them a means to reduce tensions with the US and to bring additional pressures against Peking. We are not suggesting that the Soviets presently contemplate any sacrifice of essential positions—e.g., the division of Germany and the legitimacy of a Soviet sphere in Eastern Europe. Even less likely is a major revision of China's anti-US stance.

C. Other Communist Parties

35. The fragmentation of the international Communist movement which began with Yugoslavia in 1948, has been accelerated by the intensification of the Sino-Soviet quarrel. The main document of this year's International Communist Conference registers the decline of Soviet influence over other Parties by acknowledging that the Communist movement has no single center, no leading Party. Peking will continue to have some success in creating anti-Moscow factions in Communist Parties and various front organizations. Beyond that, the Chinese will be able to attract the interest, if not always the support, of young revolutionaries repelled by the USSR's status as a "have" society. Yet the Maoist model has lost much of its previous lustre, because of the self-induced domestic convulsions of the last few years, which seemed so incomprehensible and pointless to others throughout the world, both Communist and non-Communist. We do not foresee any significant narrowing of the existing fissures in the world Communist movement.

36. Indeed, we rather expect to see more Communist Parties adopt positions which support neither Moscow nor Peking. This separateness may parallel the neutrality practiced in various ways by the Romanians and the North Vietnamese. The North Koreans and many Parties in the Third World may share Castro's suspicion, expressed some time ago, that neither Moscow nor Peking is

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sufficiently committed to the struggle against "imperialism." Still other Parties are likely to move toward what both Peking and most of the present CPSU leaders regard as revisionism. These Parties are likely to deprecate the use of violence by Communists as a means of obtaining power—this is the position taken by the Italian and Finnish Parties and the one toward which the Japanese Party seems to be headed. Other Parties will advocate lessening the role of ruling Communist Parties—this has been the policy identified with Dubcek and Tito. Temporary alliances may often cut across ideological boundaries completely, as seems to be indicated by Peking's recent flirtation with Belgrade. And many Communist Parties, regardless of their political complexion, may find it less difficult to co-exist with non-Communist groups than with each other.

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TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

1. Nearly all of the 4,150-mile Sino-Soviet border[1] derives from 19th century treaties by which an expanding Czarist Empire acquired some 590,000 square miles of territory that had been under the nominal control or domination of Manchu China. In both the western and the eastern sectors, the border traversed territory essentially unpopulated or inhabited mainly by nomadic groups—neither Russian nor Chinese. Chinese propaganda notwithstanding, both Peking and Moscow have long agreed that these treaties should serve as the basis for determining the alinement of the border and for settling other border issues.

Western Sector (See Map)

2. Most of the 1,850-mile western sector was defined by the 1860 Treaty of Peking and was demarcated in accordance with the 1864 Tarbagatay (T'a-ch'eng) Treaty.[2] Boundary modifications and territorial exchanges were made by the 1881 Treaty of Ili (or St. Petersburg). Peking refers to the loss of about 170,000 square miles through these treaties, a claim apparently based on the westernmost extension of mobile pickets sent to regulate use of pastures by nomadic Kazakhs in Central Asia (see map). Chinese control in Central Asia fluctuated greatly throughout history, however, and the westward limits of its authority were vague and usually remote from settled areas of Chinese population. When the boundary was actually demarcated in 1864, Russian officials interpreted the 1860 treaty to refer to permanent Chinese outposts located considerably east of the maximum Chinese claim. The 1881 treaty transferred about 27,000 additional square miles from the Lake Zaysan, Ili, and other areas to Russia.

3. In 1895, the southernmost sector of the border in the high Pamirs was determined, without direct Chinese participation, by an Anglo-Russian treaty designed primarily to define the boundary between British India and Russia. Although Chinese maps depict the de facto boundary in this sector, it is labeled "indefinite"—the only sector of the entire border so designated. The Chinese claim of some 8,000 square miles in the Pamirs apparently is based mainly on Manchu military operations conducted in this region during the 18th century.

4. Border incidents and tensions in the western sector have arisen frequently because of the relatively large population straddling the frontier—mainly Turkic-speaking Muslim groups such as the Kazakhs, Kirgiz, and Uighurs. Moreover, movement by these largely nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples across the frontiers

[1] The 2,650-mile Sino-Mongolian border is not included in this discussion.

[2] "Demarcation" refers to the actual physical marking of a boundary on the ground, usually by markers or pillars; or, in the case of a water boundary, by a set line on a map.

has been customary. Along the northern half of the border, several natural corridors facilitate such movement.

5. The most publicized border-crossing incident of recent years occurred in April and May of 1962, when some 60,000 Kazakhs and Uighurs fled from the Ili and T'a-ch'eng areas of northwestern Sinkiang into Kazakhstan, apparently in hope of finding better economic conditions in the USSR. Peking still complains of alleged Soviet coercion of these migrants and of Moscow's persistent refusal to return them to Chinese control. Chinese concern is heightened because these frontier tracts are easily accessible from Kazakhstan and because the USSR has in the past fostered dissident sentiments among their non-Chinese inhabitants.[5]

Eastern Sector (See Map)

6. The 2,300-mile eastern sector of the Sino-Soviet border is formed primarily by the Amur and Ussuri Rivers and, except for a small segment at the extreme western end, was established by the Treaties of Aigun (1858) and Peking (1860). China claims that these treaties resulted in the loss of some 385,000 square miles, a figure derived from the amount of territory that had been acquired by China in the Treaty of Nerchinsk (Nipchu) in 1689, which defined a boundary that incorporated almost all of the Amur Basin within China. During the intervening 170 years of Chinese ownership, however, the vast forest lands of the Amur-Ussuri territories had remained unsettled by Chinese and were almost exclusively the domain of scattered Tungusic tribes.

7. *The Problem of the Amur-Ussuri Islands.* The 19th century treaties made no specific allocation of the numerous islands in the Amur and Ussuri. In the case of the March 1969 incidents, the Chinese base their claim to ownership of Chen-pao/Damanskiy on the fact that the main navigable channel lies to the east (Soviet) side of that island. Recent Soviet public statements imply, [redacted] that the Chinese version of [redacted] location of the main channel is correct. [redacted] While acknowledging the principle of international law that the main channel determines riverine boundaries, the 13 June Soviet statement cites exceptions where a *riverbank* border is in effect and claims that the 1860 Treaty of Peking is "another such example." The Soviet version of the boundary, however, is based not on the wording of the treaty, but on an accompanying map. The Chinese claim that the map—which the Soviets have not chosen to produce—is at a scale smaller than 1:1,000,000 [6] and cannot accurately show either the riverine boundary or island ownership.

8. The USSR's evident determination to disregard the main-channel argument reflects an unwillingness to see this principle applied to other and more strategic islands, specifically Hei-hsia-tzu Island at the Amur-Ussuri confluence near Khabarovsk. Russian sources describe the boundary here—and their maps show it—

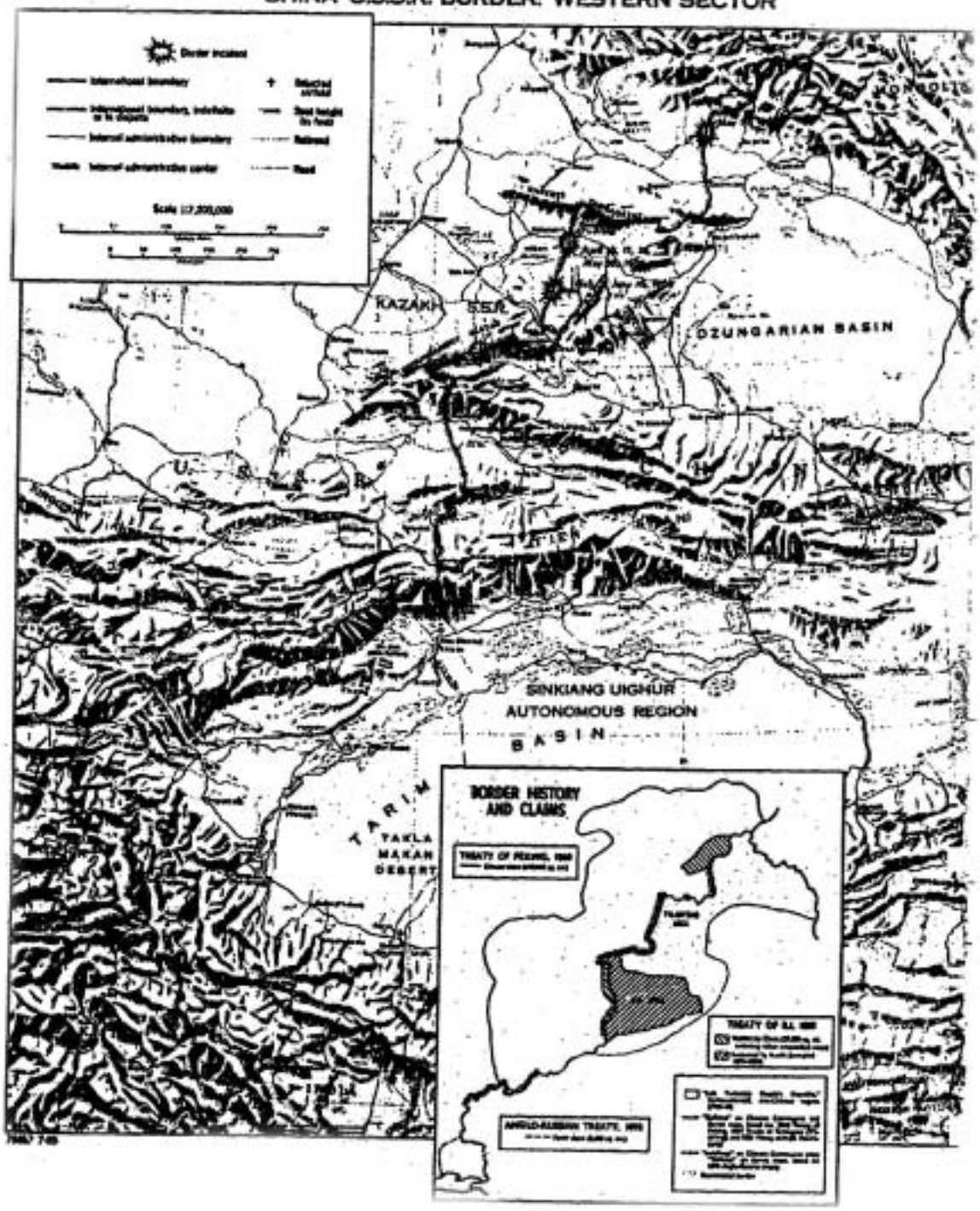
[5] This area was the base for an anti-Chinese separatist regime, the "East Turkestan People's Republic," established in 1946 with the help of Soviet-trained personnel (see map).

[6] That is, one inch on the map equals approximately 15 miles on the ground.

as following the Kazakevichova Channel at the extreme western end of the island. Chinese maps locate the boundary at the Amur-Ussuri confluence, directly opposite Khaburovsk. Hei-hsia-tzu is a low and marshy island about 25 miles long. It was occupied by the USSR in the early 1930's following the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, and permanent habitations and installations were constructed on the island. Although the USSR is in de facto occupation, the Chinese case for ownership appears to agree with the intent of the 1860 treaty as well as with the main-channel principle.

32 (Continued…)

CHINA-U.S.S.R. BORDER: WESTERN SECTOR



CHINA-U.S.S.R. BORDER: EASTERN SECTOR